



# MidWeek

This column by Senator Michelle Kidani was published in the MidWeek **WEST VOICE** section on Wednesday, March 16, 2016.

## **EMS improvements on the way**

About a year from now, we will all be celebrating the grand opening of the new ambulance station in Waipio Gentry near McDonald's. We broke ground for the facility earlier this month, and everyone there for ceremonial beginning of construction agreed that "It's about time!"

We all knew that a permanent home for paramedics who staffed Emergency Medical Services operations was critically needed to replace the temporary warehouse location for the Waipio ambulance. Waipio crews responded to about 4,500 emergency calls last year. It's a very busy location, as the resident population in Central and West Oahu has grown, with new developments at Ho'opili and Koa Ridge on the way.

These services are funded by the State Department of Health, with EMS paramedic personnel and equipment provided by the City & County. This was a high priority project in my first legislative session in 2009 and funding was quickly approved. Unfortunately, the previous administration didn't encumber the funds and the appropriation lapsed. We re-appropriated the money in 2013, and I worked closely with Mayor Caldwell and Managing Director Roy Amemiya to ensure that the new station would move from drawing board to ground breaking as quickly as possible.



***Groundbreaking  
March 1, 2016, for  
the new \$3.85 million  
Waipio EMS ambulance  
facility.***

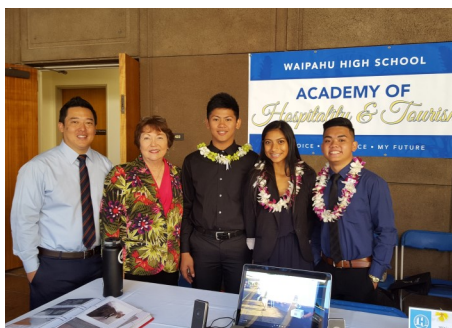
Although the original plan and design had to be scaled back to remove the auxiliary emergency communications and command center because project costs increased since the original appropriation, residents of Waipio and surrounding communities absolutely deserve this enhanced EMS capability, and I am so pleased to have played a part in making it a reality.



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## Tourism Day at the Capitol

We lawmakers welcomed Waipahu High School students in the Culinary Arts Academy and the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism to the Capitol for events that focused on the visitor industry – the state’s biggest economic driver. Tourism Day was sponsored by the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association, led by executive director Mufi Hannemann. Student chefs prepared and served a great beef salad dish and a wonderful pastry dessert to hundreds of people who stopped by their Tourism Expo booths. Congratulations to faculty leaders **Elaine Matsuo** of the Culinary Academy and **Todd Nakayama** of the Hospitality and Tourism Academy. The expertise and enthusiasm their students demonstrate are a testament to Waipahu’s great success in developing career and college readiness academies over the last few years under the exceptional leadership of **Principal Keith Hayashi**. *Great work everyone!*



## Tourism Day at the Capitol

February 23, 2016



## Waipahu’s Milken Educator leads the way

I was also proud to share the stage at Leeward Community College to present the top awards to students from Waipahu, Pearl City, Campbell and Kapolei high schools who entered projects in the Leeward District Science Fair. I joined Fair Director and Waipahu High Science Department Chair **Michael Sana** – named just last month as Hawaii’s Milken Educator – to recognize four students who will represent their schools and the State of Hawaii at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Arizona in May.

WHS juniors **Deserie Pagatpatan** and **Melara Faye Cabrera** won first place for their team research project in Translational Medicine. The Fair Director’s Award, selected by Mr. Sana, went to Waipahu senior **Liza Mae Mamuad** in the Microbiology category. Another West Oahu student, Kapolei High School senior **Arianna Marie Claveria**, was recognized for her Best Individual Research project in Materials Science. *Mahalo to teachers and families for the kind of support that makes these students so successful.*